







# The Register

Spring, 2001

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*The Register* is published twice a year by the students of Boston Latin School. Students in Classes I through VI are invited to submit their original writing and artwork. Pieces are selected by the Editorial Board of *The Register* on the basis of quality, not name recognition; the writers of all pieces remain anonymous to the Editorial Board during the selection process to ensure that no one is given an unfair advantage.

# The Register

Spring 2001

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# Table of Contents

American Angst: Can you Dig It?	Amanda Martin	5
a cinderella story	Antonius Wiriadjaja	6
Off-center love poem	Nicole Tabolt	8
Last Kiss	Michelle Whitaker	9
Historytelling	Katarina Yee	10
I'm trouble	Zoe Weinstein	12
Pure Magic	Faith Imafidon	14
Lystless	Antonius Wiriadjaja	17
laney	Erin George	21
Enigma	Seda Sean	22
La Mama de Jorge	Romina Gomez	24
transit system: mother of urban writers	Nicole Tabolt	26
Happiness 3/10/01	Max Eskin	27
How To Be Pretentious	Jack Ferris	29
Imprints of a Fairytale	Lauren Lazar	32
Your Gift Is Like A Dog Chain Around My Neck	Zoe Weinstein	33
appreciation for the present	Katarina Yee	34
Believe	Jonina Dames	35
(On Logic)	Anonymous	36
Doctrina	Dr. Cohee and Spencer Sleeper	38
Rituals	Lu Mei He	39
Revolution 9	Jack Ferris	41
Addiction	Lauren Lazar	42
. . . Is a Gentleman	Stephen Scapicchio	45
release	Michelle Whitaker	47





## *American Angst: Can You Dig It?*

My soul fills with the black heat of spiritual uprising, I writhe and twist in the recesses of my dark existence, a ghost of my life fills the atmosphere . . . or maybe that's the smell of burning toast. . .

He embraces me with his muscular arms and lifts me, his love rises to fill me with the sweet rhythm and the language only lovers share . . . bickering over plans for Friday. . .

I stare at her, the friend I once knew, the girl who inhabited my life and stole it when she ran away, the girl who is always running, I stare, but she is gone . . . she always steals my sports bra for her daily jog. . .

A single tear runs ahead of the ominous exodus of all I have ever felt with my heart, I sit with my head in my hands, eyes closed to hope that the fear will go away . . . but my precalc test is still on my desk when I open my eyes. . .

I walk away, alone as a stray slug at the doorstep, the void that is my physical being morphs into a single blade of grass, stunted by the merciless lawn mower monster. . . never get your hair cut alone. . .

I rock back as the bittersweet aroma surrounds my subtle curves and I wonder where my spiraling spirit has wandered to, and if someone will pick it up . . . I think Brandon has his car. . .

I feel words can no longer express the passion and angst I live in, the life I lead is so significant because I will never live again if I cannot share the sorry wounds of my solitary loneliness and the battle within my very being will slowly kill me if I cannot allow it to leak into the cold unfeeling world . . . good thing I have *The Register*. . .

~ Amanda Martin, II



## *a cinderella story*

Sometimes I feel like Cinderella, minus the evil ugly stepsisters. My biological sisters aren't ugly, just evil. Then there's the fact that I'm Asian, male, look horrible in glass slippers and don't do chores around the house, but those are mere trivialities. I still can't get a prince, thanks to them.

It was Monday, my least favorite day. I was lying half asleep on my couch, listening indirectly to the TV. Some reporter was talking about the Millennium March.

"BAH! Gay people, why they so special? Why they get parade?" said my mother, chopping carrots into a pot. She continued dexterously with the knife, tsking and shaking her head.

The reporter continues with an interview of a PFLAG mom.

"If my son were gay, I'd be so embarrassed!"

Suddenly, she and my sisters turn their heads slowly toward my direction. My back was turned towards them and I was sleeping facing the couch, but I could feel them peering at me. I clung to the pillows tighter.

Bursts of laughter erupted. I felt an urge to run around, scream at them and pluck out their eyes for staring down at me so condescendingly.

"When he 'turns' gay, that will be the day. HAH!" said my sister, polishing her nails.

"If he 'turns' gay, I'll castrate him myself and send him to a eunuch colony!" said my mother, as she diced a carrot in half.

"Mother! That's absurd and indecent," said my sister. "No one deserves that. . . If he turns gay, I'd just kill him, ya know, end his misery," she said, stopping only to blow on her nails.

"Now stop it both of you," said my other sister, feeding her baby. "Gayness is a disease! Someone should find a cure for it immediately." She turned her attention towards my baby nephew. "You're gonna grow up big and go to med school and be a doctor and fix all those nasty homosexuals! Yes, you are! Yes, you are!"

My nephew cooed.

"Nonsense!" exclaimed my mother. "Gay people are sent by the devil. They are demons living in people to stop procreation and end life as we know it!"

"Mom, they're not ALL like that," said my sister, now working on her toenails. "Some of them just haven't met pretty girls like, ya know, like me. Oh, did I mention that I met this GORGEOUS guy named Julianne? He's a hair stylist at Newbury and he even likes



Madonna. He's to die for! I think he's the one!"

I couldn't help but let out a snicker. Thank god they didn't notice or else they'd force an explanation of the evils of homosexuality out of me.

"You're both wrong," said my sister, wiping the baby drool off of her dress. "Many of them have genetic disorders, but the ones that are changed know that turning homosexual has many benefits. For one, some actually think they're a minority! Also there's the double-income-no-kids thing, more money that way. See, if the government wasn't such a leech with our money we wouldn't have normal people pressured into homosexuality. Thank goodness for George Bush Jr. You're gonna grow up as George Bush and save the world! Yes, you are! Yes, you are!"

My nephew lets out a holler. The drool he collected in his mouth suddenly fell onto my sister's dress.

The news returns from a seemingly endless commercial break. A new reporter this time with a new report, something about preparations for a Chinese New Year parade.

"BAH! Chinese people, why they so special? Why they get parade?"

It was then that I drifted back to sleep.

~ Antonius Wiriadjaja, I



my love poem is different  
it is

a poem that runs barefoot down hills  
plays hop-scotch in the rain  
winks at strangers  
sends valentines on christmas and the fourth of july  
tire-swings at midnight

*Off - Center*

*Love*

*Poem*

my poem listens  
holds hands  
whispers in the movie theatre  
twirls on the subway platform

my poem cheats  
kisses strangers and comes home late  
says sorry

my poem hugs  
lets moonlight listen to conversations  
shares tea on the back porch  
laughs loudly  
wears pajamas all day

my poem breathes love smells love smokes love makes love  
is happily in love

- Nicole Tabolt, II



L        s        K        s  
a        t        i        s

This is our last kiss because being together this way you just figured out is unhealthy and i spin around and i touch the ground and it's like playing a game and no one wins so everyone just goes home i think you don't know what you do for me when you're here and how much i miss you when you aren't. . . in the dark the shadows all look the same i am not afraid i quit because i see no point to this unending circle dance i twist in when the leaves fall off the trees and my tears threaten the apples of my face but don't fall because i looked at my reflection and said no unnecessary baggage for anyone anytime that includes myself i believe that it is no one's business one way or the other if i scream out in my dreams or if i sing myself awake

- Michelle Whitaker, II





## Historytelling

"Are you up yet?" my mother asks softly, while lightly knocking on my bedroom door at 6:15 in the morning.

"Uh huh. . ." I lie, groggily half-asleep, slipping into full slumber.

At 6:25 AM, I look at my clock, which reads differently for the purpose of confusing myself to wake up. It fails again this morning as I hurriedly jump up to use my remaining five minutes to prepare for school. When I'm somewhat ready to leave, I dash out of the comfort and serenity of my room to plan for another high-stress day of high school.

"Mom, I have to stay after school today," I remind her.

"I'll be a little bit late tonight too because Kevin has basketball practice," she replies as she hands me a sandwich for lunch.

"OK. Thanks, Mom. Have a nice day!"

"You too!"

Our brief morning ritual is complete when I walk through the door. I'm prepared for much harsher late-autumn temperatures, but the mildness is refreshing. As I walk briskly to the bus stop, I think about how astonishing it is that whenever I don't wake up on time, she knows. And when I am up, she knows that as well, and doesn't bother to get out of bed until she has to. It has to be more than a maternal instinct.

I've been fascinated by my mother for as long as I can remember. I've written about her too many times to count, but I've never fully captured the essence of my awe of her. Yes, she is my mother, and we do have that typical not-always-perfect mother-daughter relationship, but there's something about her--her air, her life, her stories--that enraptures not just me, but anyone who has ever encountered her.

Having grown up in South Vietnam, she has told my brother and me numerous anecdotes about our hardworking grandparents, her five siblings, and herself as a young girl. Recently, she told us of a time in grammar school, when she and her sixty classmates were eagerly waiting for the dismissal bell to ring. As they sat impatiently, she, a bit more anxious than the others, decided to tie the neck of a small inkbottle she had in her possession to the end of a string. She then whirled it around, like a cowboy with his rope in one of those old western TV shows she used to love to watch. As the fragile bottle swung in a radius around her hand, it struck one of the surrounding desks, and the black ink splattered and saturated the sheet-white uniforms of all of the students in the room. The children and the teacher were appalled. But even though she knew she was in for a painful punishment, she couldn't contain her laughter.

Her stories about school are always unusual. She used to tell us that when she was in high school, she hated chemistry and her teacher, so she would cut that class almost daily. To think that my mother used to cut class and still be ranked in the top 10% is amazing. To think she'd tell us about the rebellious days of her youth is unthinkable!

She boasts about her childhood often. About how she and her siblings were the envy of their neighborhood because their parents worked hard in the store that they owned and could afford a television set, an Easy-Bake oven, and many other *luxuries*. She describes the long and arduous journeys to buy rice with her dad and the summers in a temple with her grandmother. She recounts mistakes she has made like the first and last time she smoked a cigarette; she was nine when she found them lying in her uncle's car and thought *it would be cool*.

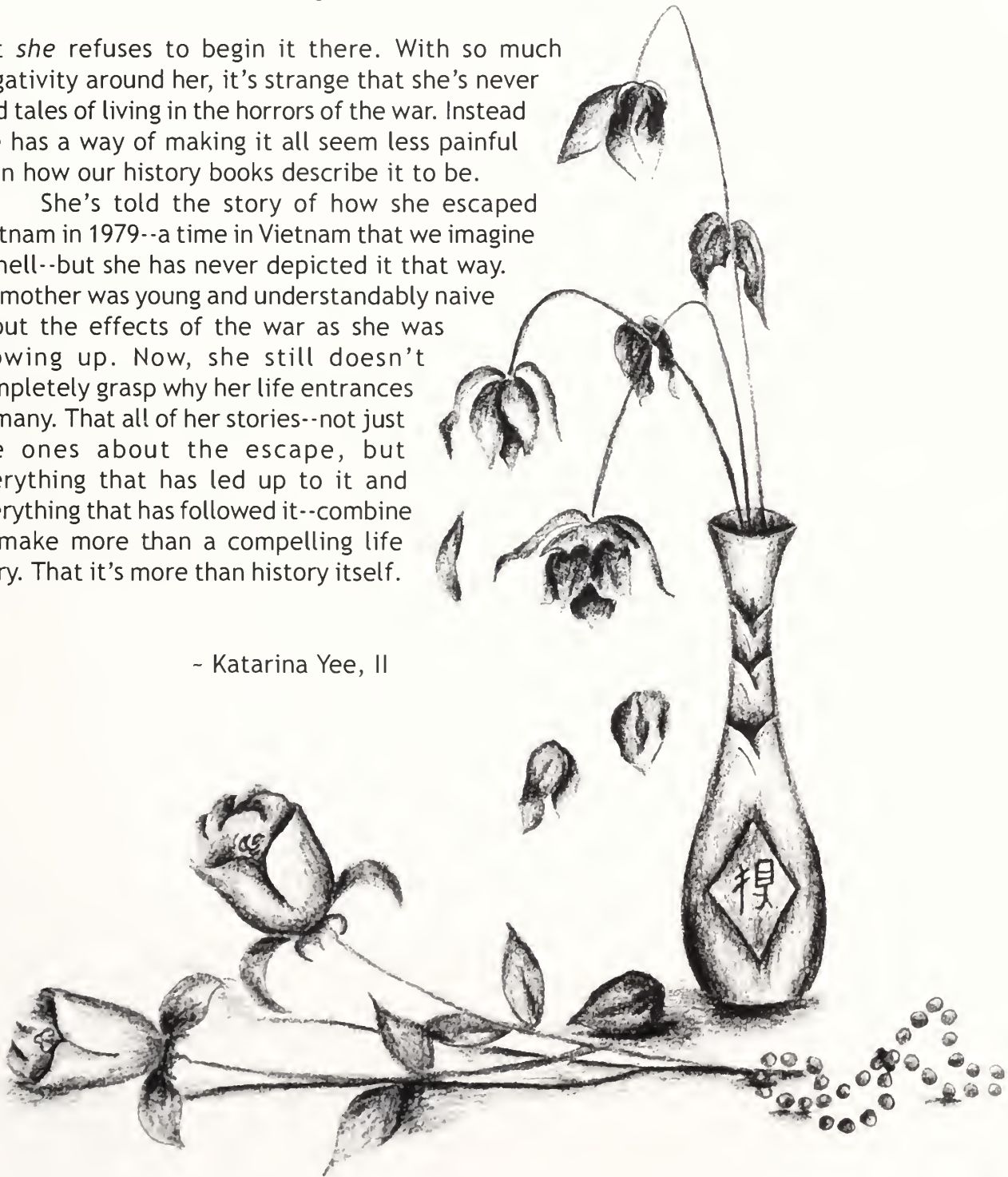
I could have begun the story here:

My mother was born in Vietnam in 1957. She doesn't remember there being a time when war wasn't a part of her everyday life. She was so accustomed to gunfire and explosions surrounding her that she couldn't sleep unless the nightly sounds filled the evening.

But *she* refuses to begin it there. With so much negativity around her, it's strange that she's never told tales of living in the horrors of the war. Instead she has a way of making it all seem less painful than how our history books describe it to be.

She's told the story of how she escaped Vietnam in 1979--a time in Vietnam that we imagine as hell--but she has never depicted it that way. My mother was young and understandably naive about the effects of the war as she was growing up. Now, she still doesn't completely grasp why her life entrances so many. That all of her stories--not just the ones about the escape, but everything that has led up to it and everything that has followed it--combine to make more than a compelling life story. That it's more than history itself.

~ Katarina Yee, II



## *I'm trouble*

every muscle gracefully sculpted  
and stretched to elastic fluidity,  
I rise, an artwork of humanity.  
and this form, of course, pampered:  
silken my skin with almond oil,  
soften my hair with henna grease,  
perfume my skin with musk and spices,  
until I am your exotic goddess  
washed in immortal waters,  
plucked from Zeus's head or Buddha's knee  
and given to you  
like Pandora.

~Zoe Weinstein, II







## *Pure Magic*

To know him was to love him. And I did love him. He was one of those few who could put a smile on anyone's face even if it did mean making a spectacle of himself. I was honored by the mere thought of knowing him. He represented all that was high and good. There was this peculiar magic-wonder that followed him. How everyday felt like Christmas whenever he was around.

Convinced. I was convinced. He was pure magic. Capable of making blind men see, turning oil into water, making me happy, all that and more. I was but a kid then, but I still believe it. There are just some things — some feelings you can never forget or outgrow. He was one of those few you could trust. That's a lot coming from me. He'd simply go out of his way. . . What I needed — he always gave it to me. Put up with my temper tantrums. My "rebellious" years. He understood me so well. With just a look, he could quiet me down. With his teasing grin, he made me laugh. Through the smallest touch of my hand, he understood. I jokingly called him "Psychic Know It All." And he did know it all.

I remember we used to dance. We would dance and dance, even when he was tired; even though he couldn't do it that well, he never stopped. Always used to save a dance for me. His dancing queen. We'd spin in circles, his clumsy foot would occasionally step on mine accompanied by an apology. Nonetheless, he was a Fred Astaire in my eyes. We would sit on the couch gasping for breath. Smiles. Always a smile. I was his dancing queen.

Sometimes we would sit on the porch all night gazing at the stars and moon. He named one after me. I laughed.

"Is there really a man in the moon?" he would ask.

"I dunno." I didn't know. I didn't care. If that so called man in the moon existed, he didn't hold a candle to *him*.

There was that time we went to the movies and he fell asleep. The loudest thing in that theater was his snoring. When he woke up he asked me, "When's the movie starting?" I loved everything about him. That silly grin. The lone dimple. The way his short black hair seemed to sparkle. It was the magic dust. . . His big brown eyes. His bushy eye brows. I could praise him from now until the other side of forever.



And then I heard he had died. I dropped the phone before I could get specifics. Dead. He was dead. You know that feeling you get when you're on the verge of waking up? Things start to quiet down, colors start to fade, and you feel yourself slipping away. That's what it was. Blurry, confusing, slipping away. Then I cried. He had told me yesterday that he'd meet me at 5:00 PM. For there'd be enough time to see a movie and enough time to sneak into another one. He was supposed to meet me that day. It was already 5:00 PM.

The destitution that remains here is so overwhelming. I don't know what to do. Yelling into the dark, always falling down, down, down, I did it all. I miss him terribly. I don't see how the world can function without him in it. The world should not work. It should not go on. People should not be smiling. The sun is NOT supposed to be shining. The world simply is not supposed to go on. It's not supposed to. . .

This whole death ordeal doesn't float my boat. People like him aren't supposed to leave us. What happens now? What happens after the crying, the yelling, this dull aching pain? Is there anything? There's the memory. No one — nothing will ever make me forget. Because I can't forget I can't forget my best friend. I can never forget my father.

- Faith Imafidon, III







## *Lystless*

It is Monday, January 29, 2001, 11:35 PM. Yesterday was wonderful; today was ok. I woke up. I left and went to work, I went home, I didn't do my homework. I did everything I usually do on a usual Monday. My friend is dead.

"baby?"

"hi, what's up?"

". . .are. . . how are you feeling?"

"great, you?"

". . .something happened."

### *Freedom*

The first thing that went in my mind was a December night; she wore beautiful contacts.

". . .something happened."

"What? What happened?"

". . .something. . ."

She was so perfect. Her most perfect aspect was that she knew she wasn't perfect. I hurt. I am tired. I hate. I am weary.  
If only I knew that that was her greatest fault.

"she WHAT?"

"yes. . ."

My greatest memory with her must've been when we went to see a movie. We weren't supposed to, since it was NC 17; we sneaked in anyway. Then we went into the main station, but we decided not to ride the train. It was raining that November night, and the icy raindrops fell hard onto me. We shared her umbrella, even though I wore a hoody.

". . ."

*It's raining and there is no one for me to turn to.*

We walked past the Charles River, across the bridge. At one place we stopped to look at the water, but it smelled of sewage. We walked away, only to stop again.

"When? How?"

"I don't know. . . her brother called me tonight."

The next thing we knew, we were standing in the Boston Common concrete gazebo. We stood there happily while the freezing rain continued.



no one.

It was freezing.

" . . ."  
" . . ."

Last New Year's Eve, I spent it with her. Her, me and her friend; my new friend.

"Honey, she passed away."

*It will pass. Pain comes with glory. Pain is only temporary. Life is only temporary. So does pain equal life?*

"passed away"

We went to her house. All the way there she and her friend discussed good times. We tried to get her to get in the bathtub with us, but ended up sleeping on her bed instead. I remember her first words when she entered the room: there's a boy in my bed!"

*To be strong, to be weak? HOW am I handling this? I feel REALLY alone alone alone.*

"Is this a joke?"

"I hope so."

'There's a boy in my bed!'

"I . . . I don't know what to do, what I'm doing. . ."

"It's the calm before the storm. We're about to meet our hell."

*I am now in my vacuum and it is up to me to get out of it I don't know where I want to go from here*

'a boy'

'Oh look. It says in this book, if we eat a grape at the stroke of midnight, we get to wish for something!'

'Wow'

'hey, I have some grapes'

"how could she?"

I remember the day we went to scrub off food from my sister. We got fries, drinks and burgers. We fed the pigeons. One pigeon pooped on her head.

*I want to puke out all of the repulsive shit that has decayed in me.*

"How could she?"

'TEN!'

'here we go guys!'

'NINE!'



'I got the grapes!'  
'EIGHT!'

"fudge!" she said. She walked me home, even though it was in the other direction of her house, and back towards the place we despised the most. We saw a dead bird on the ground. "good riddance" she said.

'SEVEN!'  
'Wow!'  
'SIX!'  
'hey, they're not even squashed.'

Once, I cut school but went to school anyway to meet some friends. They weren't there, but she was there. I rollerbladed with her. I fell.

'FIVE!'  
'Oh you guys!'  
'FOUR!'

She picked me up.

'there's a boy in my bed!'

Another time we went swimming. I sank like a rock.

'THREE!'  
'what are you wishing for?'  
'I'm not telling! Haha'  
'Aww, man!'  
'TWO!'  
'Ok, in the grapes go!'

She pushed me back up.

*disgusted*

I saw her in the hallway. I've seen her in the hallway many times.

"What am I supposed to do? How am I to feel?"

But today was different. . .

"Right the wrong, Antonius. Right the wrong."

Today...  
'ONE!'

*I wish*



I hugged her that December night.

*I wish someone could give me a big ol'hug right about now*

I hugged her after we walked in the rain.

*a big ol'hug right about now*

I hugged her after the bird pooped on her head, after I fell while rollerblading, after  
I sank like a rock.

*give me a big ol'hug*

I hugged her always.

*Someone*

Today...

*there is nothing waiting for me*

I didn't hug her.

". . ."

'i wished that we three would remain friends forever!'

'AAWWW!'

'Awww!'

". . ."

WHYYYY?

"WHY?"

Why?

". . ."

Disgusted

". . ."

Cause it hurts so badddd

It is Tuesday, January 30, 2001. 12 :29 AM. Yesterday was ok, today is today . My  
friend is dead

Freedom

*I want it*

Cause the oppression is iron-clad

*Delusions hopeless delusions*

"Right the wrong!"



-To Tam. i love you dearly  
Antonius B.I.G.

*l a n e y*

her face is a legend of wrinkles from age  
and years of smoking  
brows are furrowed as hands worn smooth  
punch the hell out of reckless bread dough  
she could be described as a baker, a creator  
seven kids, fifteen grandchildren, countless nieces and nephews

who crawled screamed dented fought laughed tumbled  
through the house she was born into  
and to this day lives  
i could say she survived births deaths wars busing  
weddings hard times and the good ones too but  
she's more than a survivor.  
she's a conqueror, a woman who can mystify her way out of anything

befriend you for life by the music she lets out if you've humored her

scare the bejesus out of you when she gets angry while  
simultaneously offering the sanctuary of her kitchen  
and the ancient stove that exudes heat and irish blessings  
walking oral tradition she is,  
a memory with a capacity so large it seems to exceed  
the seventy-two years her presence has graced earth with  
fascination sets in when she begins a tale  
for her zealous vivacity enthralls her lucky subject  
a brazen liberal feminist before her time, she still possesses

the graceful charm only found in those of true regality  
knowing some of her blood pumps through my veins  
leaves me with a childlike awe  
and just as i'm about to ask her one more question,  
hoping to receive one more eye-opening reply,  
she looks up and blows me  
a flour-cloud kiss  
and starts humming her favorite Patsy Cline song  
i understand not to interrupt and  
sit silently and contentedly  
watching the form of her infinite apple pie  
take shape

~ Erin George, II





## *Enigma*

My authoritative power over this person intoxicates me.

~It has a bitter taste. ~

As my long, gray fingers wrap around his cold neck, my sharp, immaculate nails scrape lovingly, biting, through his tender flesh.

Pleasure is derived from pain.

Blood begins to tickle slowly down.

Almost unnoticeably

His submission. I need it. It needs me. This choke-hold of overwhelming power.

I need it. It needs me.

A promise of immediate warmth is the initial reason he chose me.

~Little does he know that my warmth is but the chill of vindictive spite. ~

He keeps me on because he knows he can't live without me. Every breath he loses, I breathe in. I give him a false sense of rejuvenation. He thinks he is happy; he does not see the blood.

My gray skin drinks the blood.

It rejuvenates me.

I am happy.

We live in a world of balance; my (friend) and I. He feeds the dominatrix in me. I give him comfort and my warmth.

Time freezes. Air thaws.

I begin to realize how entangled I have become (with this person) It's been too long. He has found true warmth. His belief in me subsides. My body untangles itself.

Quickly, with ease, I slide carelessly to the ground.

I have no worries.

Someone new will find me. Someone... *impressionable*.

(I am a scarf of coarse, gray wool.)

~ Seda Sean, I









## La Mamá de Jorge

Yesterday I saw her. I noticed her for really the first time. I never realized how old she actually looked, her black hair sprinkled with gray and deep worry lines scarred into the face of her skin. I had never noticed before. Maybe because I never really cared. She had always been the lady at Church, the mother of my estranged friend, Jorge. Even when I used to go over to her house, her presence was hardly ever noticed. It wasn't even until a few weeks ago that I learned her name was Ana.

Jorge had introduced her as "*mi mamá*," his mother, and I had merely continued to call her *la mamá de Jorge* to others and to her face, the respectful title of *Señora*. Not that she ever answered back or even acknowledged that I had spoken. She would continue on about her business of cooking endlessly so that the little brick house they lived in always smelled of fried tortillas and sautéed onions.

But I noticed her last night. She's such a small woman with thick hands that, when idle, she clutches in front of her as if in prayer. I wonder what she prays for. Lately, I've been wondering a lot about her. Ever since last month when I learned that I was not who my family claimed I was.

There had been another death in the family. My mother had died of cancer, a slow torturous death that killed her years before she actually died. I had come home to discover that my mother had died while I was taking an evening walk. The priest and the other necessary authorities had been notified, and I was left without a mother.

The day after her funeral, the priest came back accompanied by my estranged friend Jorge, his mother and his father. After sympathies had been exchanged, I was informed that the man I had always believed to be my father was nothing more than a man who had married my mother three months before I was born. And when

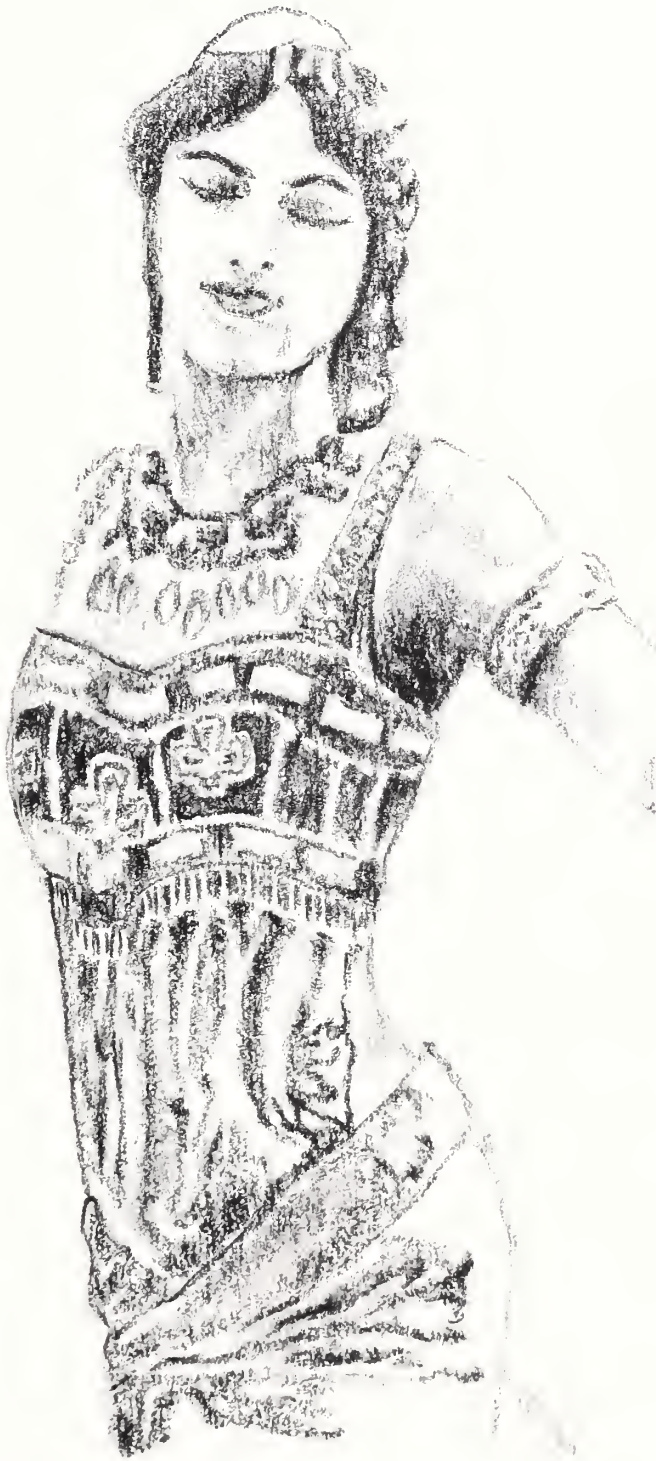
he had proclaimed to the world after the divorce that I was a bastard, he had indeed been telling the truth. It turned out that my mother had had a romantic affair with the father of my estranged friend and that I was a product of the secret they had both kept hidden from me for seventeen years. The room began to spin until it stopped several weeks later and I found myself face to face with *la mamá de Jorge*.

It was just as awkward as I had expected such an encounter to be. I was on my first walk since Mother's death and as I was rounding the corner of my street there she was, standing in the middle of the sidewalk as if she had been expecting me to meet her. Running into her caught me unaware. My first reaction was a blinding need to run away from her. I had not spoken to any member of her family since that other night, and I hadn't planned on doing so anytime soon. I tried to force myself to move away but I couldn't. She didn't seem to be moving either. If it had not been for her blinking eyes, I would have thought that maybe she wasn't really alive, but just another dream I was having. Much like the same dreams I had been having about my mother.

I forced myself to look up at her and I was met with the steady gaze of her dark eyes. After a few moments she reached out and placed something small into my hand. My eyes fell to the object she had handed to me. It was a small and familiar picture. The smiling faces of my mother and me as a thirteen-year-old child stared back at me. It was a picture taken at my thirteenth birthday. Jorge and his family had been present. It was also the last time any of them had been invited to any of our family festivities. Jorge and I had drifted apart that year, and our families had suddenly stopped talking. It suddenly occurred to me that perhaps that too had been because of me.







As I stared longer at the picture, I noticed that it was not complete. My mother's left arm was cut off, the same arm that had been wrapped around the waist of Jorge's father. This half of the picture, along with the other half with

Jorge and his father, had been a permanent fixture in Jorge's house. It had been part of an endless series of pictures of family, friends and acquaintances. Was the other half still hanging on their wall: a mutilated and incomplete picture with just a boy and a smiling man with a woman's manicured hand at his waist?

I tore my eyes away from the picture and met the gaze of Jorge's mother. "Do you hate me?" I asked breaking the silence that was between us. She didn't even blink. I was answered with the same silence she had given me every time I spoke to her, only now there was no kitchen for her to run off to. It was just her and me. I wanted to tell her that we had both been deceived and that it wasn't my fault that I had been born. But mostly I wanted her to answer my questions.

Did she hate me? Did she hold me responsible for tearing her family apart now that my mother was no longer here to blame? Did she know how sorry and guilty I felt?

I don't know when exactly I began to cry but when I realized I was, Jorge's mother had already wrapped her arms around me and was hugging me with a strength I never knew she had. I felt myself start to fall into her embrace when she pulled herself far enough to look into my eyes.

"Yes," she said her voice soft and steady and her expression never changing as she spoke her first and last words to me. "Yes, I do hate you." And with that she let me go completely and hurried back towards the direction of her little brick house.

~ Romina Gomez, I

three hundred people  
Just wanting to go home

of  
of  
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of of of of  
urban  
urban  
n o t h e r  
an  
an w r i t e r s  
an urban  
r w r i t e r s  
of of  
of of  
of of of of

**mother**  
**of**  
**urban**  
**writers**

~ Nicole Tabolt, II



## *Happiness 3/10/01*

The brightest lights in town are right beside us  
I feel exactly the same way as you  
Like a super-ant crawling through a concrete anthouse  
Like a wish that was made when there's nothing to wish for

Another one might be to go somewhere else  
Ca-li-fornia dreaming about anyplace at all  
Thinking there's an outfit somewhere with  
The same color and diameter polka dots as us buttons

And the caribbean man in a chain mail of paper money,  
The gaudy displays of clothes and jewelry,  
Wanting to be all and nothing, everywhere and nowhere  
Simultaneously, at the same time.

An unexpressed compliment, and an unstated thank you.  
An unsaid hello, and a goodbye that's irrelevant  
Because we don't even know if there is a God.  
There's not an action figure of him, or a t-shirt.

Love, tearing us apart, because inside is the moth,  
Inside us is the candle flame, and one flies into the other,  
Reborn and it flies in again. The wax drips over our memory  
And we tell ourselves that it's better that way.

The brightest lights in town are inside him and her,  
The twin deities of love, him for you, her for me,  
Who are icy statues, pure fire in the sun, darkness at night.  
If you touch one, your finger sticks on forever.

Or what if you kiss it, that haughty memory of kindness,  
That slender figure that was an optical illusion,  
The ghost, the film with an image of beauty  
That when exposed to the light turns absolutely black?

We are all like researchers, trying to duplicate an experiment  
That keeps being done on TV, but never works in real life.  
We all try over and over to corroborate the results, trusting them,  
And let the experiment take forever but the theory be right.

Is it like proving the existence of the aether?  
But it is all a joke anyway, something we didn't get the first time,  
But don't laugh later either, because we don't want to believe  
That the first time, it was no more serious than now.





Those sullen people you said were unhappy all want the lights,  
They want to burn up in the lights and be crucified on them,  
They want to be raped by them and to have them injected,  
The lights that shine for no one because no one understands:

The brightest lights in the town are inside ourselves;  
The brightest lights in the city are in our eyes.  
And if my heart does not beat madly, it is because  
I look for them somewhere where I know I won't find them.

~ Max Eskin, *I*



## *How To Be Pretentious*

Being pretentious is a subject about which I know everything, because I am far more learned than everyone else. Because of my vast knowledge and the general ignorance of the public, I have decided to impart my wisdom to a select group of informed citizens. I am sure only this select group will read my writing. Ignorant people, you understand, are too stupid to understand my work. But then, we mustn't blame them. They aren't too bright. Eventually, perhaps, they will learn.

The first major step toward becoming pretentious is, of course, maintaining the proper appearance. One of the most common misconceptions is that in order to be pretentious, one must wear "dress-up" clothing such as a suit and tie. This is not true. Through the simple use of a pair of spectacles, you can appear extremely pretentious. Please remember that they are never glasses; glasses are for the proletariat. They are *spectacles*. Do not wear your spectacles like most people do, for if you did, it would imply something was wrong with your eyesight. Instead, let your spectacles rest on the very tip of your nose. This way everyone will know the truth: you are, in fact, only wearing spectacles to complete your intellectual image. Occasionally, some mortal being fails to comprehend the purpose of this. Simply raise your eyebrows and stare down at him through your spectacles. Eventually, perhaps, he will learn.

A lot of being pretentious is merely correcting the mistakes of those who are less fortunate than you and not so clever as you. There is always some fool who gets it into his head that he knows more about a subject than you, just because he has spent his entire life studying it, and you have only heard it mentioned once or twice. It is your duty to inform these sad, deluded beings that you are their superior. Unfortunately, calmly explaining this to them doesn't do a bit of good, they always go off on some tangent about how you are presuming to tell them something they already know, or similar rubbish that doesn't relate to the subject matter. It is still always a good idea to try to get their feeble minds to comprehend. When they don't, simply raise your eyebrows, stare down your spectacles at them, shake your head in disgust and walk away. Eventually, perhaps, they will learn.

There is a proper, pretentious way to introduce yourself that is commonly out of practice, except by geniuses like me. Let's take a hypothetical example. Let's say that you are at a party, and one particular person is touting the benefits of the "DSL" connection he has just purchased. You may have no knowledge of computers, but this is okay. Computers are, after all, for the proletariat. You still must inform him that he is wrong. Walk up to him as he is speaking, and say quite loudly, so that everyone can hear you, "Are you still using DSL?" and then laugh a bland cocktail party laugh, as if you are simply reading "Ha, ha, ha" from a piece of paper. Continue with something like, "I've upgraded to DMZ. It's so much easier." Then put out your hand and smile as if you were speaking to a child, and introduce yourself. Most of the time, this poor sap will try to tell you that there is no such thing as DMZ, and he may even be right, but he is completely missing the point. Simply stare down your spectacles at him, shake your head in disgust, walk away, and find someone else to introduce yourself to. Eventually, perhaps, he will learn.

I have only skimmed the surface of being pretentious here, but I have mentioned the most important parts. You may occasionally want to use words like "convoluted" even out of context, or randomly say, "Bully, bully" as an example of other things you can try. And there are so many more. (Ah, powdered wigs, what would I do without you?) Go out and experiment.

I realize that I have actually made a mistake (a rare occurrence). Doing these things will not actually make you pretentious; this is simply the word common people use as a negative way to speak about someone who is attempting to enlighten them. Do not worry, though. Eventually they will learn. They will learn that you are not pretentious at all, but that you are actually their superior. They will learn to revere your name. They will learn to post your advice on billboards. Eventually, perhaps, they will learn.

*~ Jack Ferris, II*







騰雲

美頤

五月一九九八年

## *Imprints of a Fairytale*

I'm sitting in front of the computer, with teary eyes, trying to capture what it is I'm feeling. I'm wondering why you're not here, wondering what you're thinking. If only you knew the way I look at you, the way I feel when I'm with you or when I'm just thinking of you. There are imprints and scars of you flowing through my veins. I can only go so far. Imagine so much. I wish to the point where it kills--to have you love me the way I love you. If only...I think to myself. But thinking like that never did anyone any good.

It just makes me sulk and sink into this dark hole of emptiness, or half emptiness I should say. Maybe it's better if I just forget. When I talk to you, to see right through you, to ignore what I feel. To bury it deeper and deeper and deeper beneath the truth. The deeper my desires hide themselves, the closer I'll be to forgetting hidden emotion. The easier it will be. The lies will become the truth. The truth will become lies. I'll get dizzy and not know which way is up or down. My heart will become numb with pain.

Pain you say? Pain from what?? I have you here in the grasp of my everything. I love you, and you love me. So what measures love? What measures pain? What am I thinking? I'll tell you what I'm thinking, someday. Someday when the world can survive with a little heartbreak without cracking into a million shattered pieces.

There was that time when I slept over at your house, and I couldn't sleep because I knew you were lying next to me--untouchable. I was seeing heaven through a glass window. You rolled over and put your head on my arm. I couldn't move. I couldn't think. The whole night I stared into darkness and felt the warmth of your body. I felt the up and down of your breath. The smell of your hair surrounded me. The slight touch of your leg sent shivers throughout my body.

Eventually, the sun began to creep through the blinds onto your face. I couldn't take my eyes off you. You were so beautiful. There was no other place in the world I wanted to be. It was quiet, and the room was golden with peace; it glowed with your presence. And I was thinking . . . what I wouldn't give to wake up like this every morning. But you were somewhere else far away, without me.

I've got to get you out of my mind. Endless thoughts of you. Amazed at the idea that your being and soul exist in this world, separate from my own. Amazed by all your intricate layers of self. Simply amazed. And the saddest part of it all is that you'll never get to know how much I truly love you because I cannot have you. I would ask you to let me show you. But that would be asking for too much. I'd be asking you to expose yourself. To feel something you could never feel, to put our place in the universe on hold, to sacrifice all that we've built. And here I've been. . .building dreams.

That's all this is -- a fairytale. It's that cozy feeling you get when you wake up in the wee hours of darkness, stretching and releasing the tingly, evangelic afterthought. Forgetting those puzzled, meaningless flashes of R.E.M. with the brightness of cool, crisp morning. I want to wrap myself in that white chill of early breath so I can freeze and shake out of this daze. Better yet, I want to wrap you in the spontaneous rapture of sleep. I want you to long for the night as I do. We'll be safe together hiding under the velvet blanket of promises and stars, intoxicated with wonder. Hopefully, by then it will be day, and we'll be awake, together.

~ Lauren Lazar, III

## *Your Gift Is Like A Dog Chain Around My Neck*

first gift, an amber necklace,  
crystallized ancient sap,  
as old as patriarchy. Adam and Eve  
remind me that I, your rib,  
am now bound to you in silver chattel.  
branded, not by the fleeting sting of  
a hissing hot poker, no,  
by history, a truer prison. by sexism,  
which will forever make me  
barefoot and weak  
lesser, lower, lingering at your feet.  
your gift,  
a golden teardrop,  
weight on my chest.

- Zoe Weinstein, II





i want to bask in these days  
of pulling all-nighters  
and talking on the phone for six hours out of boredom  
  
of angry e-mails about the status of friendships  
and blue pen marks on the side of my hand from impossible history tests  
(and from being a lefty)  
  
freaking out about pre-calculus  
and family  
and too many absences  
too many tests  
too much to think about  
like seeing *him* yesterday  
the day before yesterday  
exactly a week ago  
exactly a month ago. . . was his birthday  
(how do i know that?)

i love analyzing the opposite sex  
shakespeare  
my feelings  
your feelings versus his feelings

i love listening to bruce springsteen  
wishing for *that* day because of *that* song  
wishing for spring  
for last summer  
for graduation  
for being four and carefree  
for college  
for almost any moment in the past  
or any moment in the future  
never for what's now

*appreciation  
for the  
present*

because through the years  
months  
days  
moments  
i've convinced you  
and myself  
that i hate all of this

even though we both know  
somehow

i love it

~ Katarina Yee, II



## *Believe*

If I close my eyes, I can pretend that the water on my face is only from the shower. I can pretend that he didn't leave me, didn't smile as he left and my tears fell onto the pillow. If I close my eyes, he'll come back to me, hold me, kiss me and tell me it was all a stupid joke. If I close my eyes.

The water pours over my body, washing away his scent, his touch. Here, where he held me, here, where he kissed me, I scrub harder. I am scalded by too-hot water, burning him off of my skin. The shower beats at my head, my body, forcing me into submission until I sink to the floor of the tub. Here are my hands. Here is my skin. He does not own me.

With an effort, I rise once more to my feet and step out of the shower. I surround myself in the warmth of a towel, so unlike his heat, his passion, and dry myself carefully. Every touch will bruise; every inch of skin is dying to be touched. By him.

My feet leave wet prints through the hallway, marking a path to my bedroom. I let the towel drop to the floor and look anywhere but the bed. The bed where he and I last lay; the bed with just a few drops of blood on it. Just a few. Just enough.

Cursing, I slam my bedroom door shut. The sound echoes throughout the empty house, and I turn to face my reflection in the mirror. My face is pale, streaked with tears, yet still closed to the world, showing none of the grief and pain I had feared to see. It is my eyes that deceive, flashing as black as ever. Black as the hair that hangs to my waist, hiding my full breasts and lean stomach. He had called me beautiful. Maybe he lied. Maybe not.

He lied about everything else.

He lied when he first smiled at me, lied when he said he cared. He lied when he danced with me, lied when he requested 'our song.' He lied when he told me he loved me.

But I am the fool who believed him.

Lying on the floor, I curl up inside a nest of blankets. Here I am safe, I can sleep.

I do not touch the bed.

~ Jonina Dames, IV



## *(On Logic)*

Caution: Ability to be profound diminishing as I grow contempt for those who seek the illusion of order.

What follows **will** be the mindless rambling of one without a mind to understand people's actions much less his own.

What I find sitting in the place of order is not chaos. Chaos would be too simple. Everyone would accept the lack of meaning, reason, and order.

-We would move on-

Instead, what I find is this perfect ambiguity, bordering on sanity and insanity, logic and absurdity, order and chaos.

The only way we can tell that nothing makes sense is by knowing and endlessly pursuing the idea that the opposite must be true.

~ Anonymous









## Doctrina

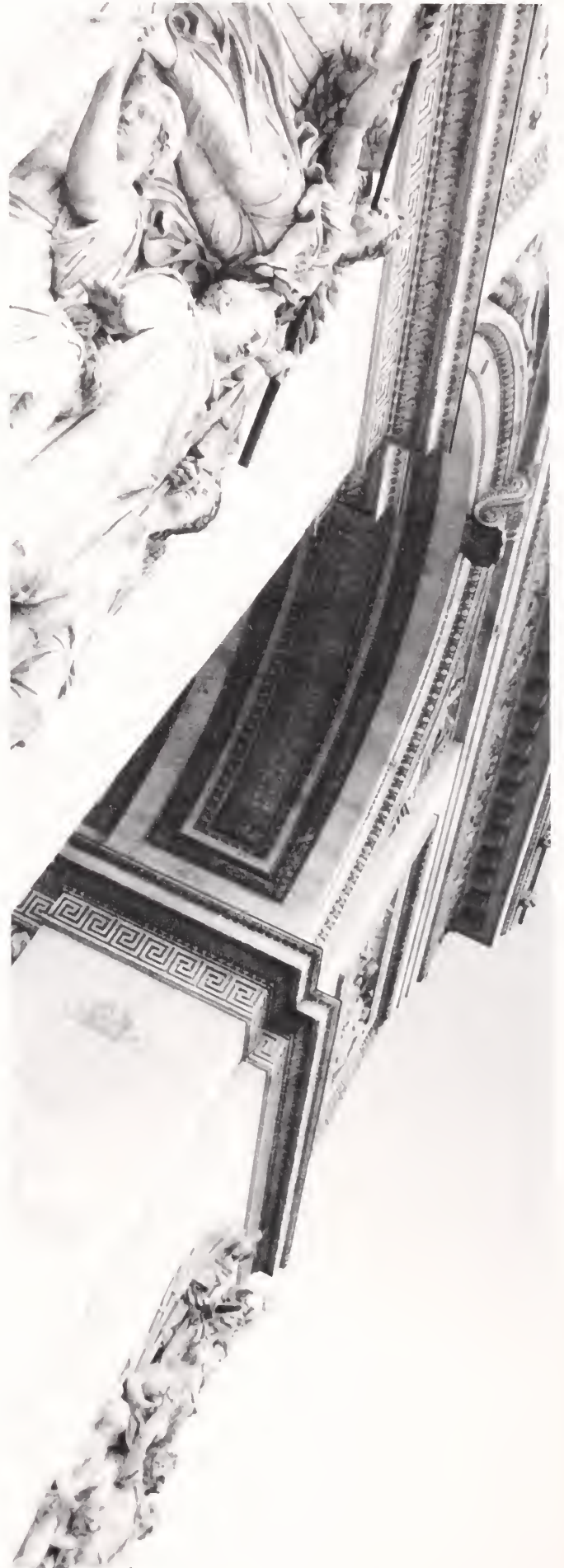
Talis lux perenne cadat.  
Per vitrum se defundat  
in mensam super libros  
ut trans paginam verba.  
Ad hoc est nobis sanguis,  
libri, verba, mensa, vitrum,  
et lux quae nostra fecit—  
laboris perfecti ludum.  
Lege: subito amittere aequum.

~ Dr. Peter Cohee  
Classics Department

## Learning

Let such a light forever fall.  
Through the glass, let it spill  
onto the table, over the books,  
as across the page the words.  
For this purpose, our blood,  
books, words, table, glass,  
and the light that makes these ours—  
play of a perfect work.  
Read: suddenly, a loss is fair.

~ Translated by  
Spencer Sleeper, II



## *Rituals*

on and on,  
lifting, turning—

your fingers  
dancing  
across the  
pages

the wholeness of the time before dawn  
when a certain gray is  
lifted  
from the air and I could  
always find my way  
across  
the rooms in the semi-  
darkness

the spaces between the sheets  
the hours between 12 and 5  
when all the dreaming takes place  
even though the faucet is still dripping and time is melting  
with less than  
three hours of sleep  
before-  
(the red penitentiary consumes me again and again)  
but even that does not  
matter  
as long as I shut my eyes and  
float

~ Lu Mei He, II





the misdirected lines converge  
as if in some demented diagram  
for math class, or the SATs  
on the single vertex of Adrenaline

Pink grooves on an otherwise vivacious White  
in elongated Vs, and parallel lines  
the shapes are curiously perfect  
in a sort of haphazard way  
excited, but still languid somehow

the morbid Pink canyons  
are only shadows  
of the cold steel that once traversed their highways  
relentlessly seeking that quiet chaos

the infinite White is plagued by its Pink past  
the crimson  
Red  
that once flowed through  
has brought about imperfect wounds  
while also healing mental scars  
too deep to touch

Adrenaline Red  
harbinger of the tranquility right before the explosion  
the last instant before the collapse  
escalating to the last point before traveling  
over the top

and no matter how much we want to help  
we can merely come to the conclusion  
that only she knows  
Why  
and there's nothing we can do  
because the Real scars are already gone  
destroyed by the ones we can already see

*R*  
*N* *E*  
*O* *V*  
*I* *O*  
*T* *L*  
*U*

~ Jack Ferris, II



n  
 i o  
 t i c  
 i d  
 d i c  
 d i o  
 d a  
 d i c  
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 a d  
 a n  
 o  
 i

the misty aromatic nothingness  
 sPiRaLs out of  
 the still lake of blackness  
 sheltered in the solid white mold  
 luring me from nowhere  
 energizing.  
 all my senses magnified,  
 the moisture penetrating;  
 the distinct bitter taste  
 flows down to the core of my being.

a d d i c t i  
 n  
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 o  
 n

usually drunk— quickly  
 to escape our world without trying.  
 to face restless reality.  
 soothing tonight  
 changing its ingredients  
 to interrupt that deceiving trance  
 and brings me to hypnotic composure  
 drifting lightness  
 finally a potion  
 that is now sweet.  
 a neutral state  
 instead of waking, sleeping.

~ Lauren Lazar, III











# THE GAME

FAT CAT  
DRAW CARD

DRAW  
FATED  
CARD

HIT by  
the Oscar  
Meyer Wiener  
Truck

Followed  
Attacked  
in friend  
off of

gang of  
tunaway  
ledgehgs.

THE  
OLD POP  
ROCKS  
AND  
SODA TRUCK

min the  
lottery and  
in the ex-

FALL  
TO Titled  
to death.

But a  
lighter  
any sleep

- 1. Billy
- 2. Bobby
- 3. Greg
- 4. Timmy
- 5. Steve
- 6. John
- 7. Mark
- 8. David
- 9. Michael
- 10. James

Followed  
Attacked  
in friend  
off of

Followed  
Attacked  
in friend  
off of

Followed  
Attacked  
in friend  
off of

Followed  
Attacked  
in friend  
off of

Followed  
Attacked  
in friend  
off of

Followed  
Attacked  
in friend  
off of



## *...Is a Gentleman*

Few noticed him. Only the children, they still had that innocence. They hadn't been tainted by what we call "the truth." He was clad in a three-piece suit. It was black, custom tailored. In his line of work, it paid to look professional; you didn't want your clients to be intimidated. He had a slow pace as he walked down the crowded street. In his right hand he carried a cane. That wasn't what caused his slow pace. That came just from habit. Why should he rush? Everyone came to him soon enough anyway. No, he just fancied the cane. It was oak, solid, sturdy, and capped in a rather unusual fashion. The knob of it was a skull, crafted in silver, and the eyes were inlaid with rubies. Its blood red eyes seemed to follow you, that is, if you actually saw him and his cane. Where the spine of the skull's body should have been, the cane began and continued until ending in a bronze tip. He came to the intersection now. It was a lovely day. The birds were chirping. Mothers passed by with their children. He must have been too early. The serenity of day had not yet been broken. He reached into his breast pocket and retrieved a watch. It caught the sun as he flipped the cover open. Yes, just as he thought. He still had fifteen minutes before his break was up. Well, he might as well make the best of it. Free time did not come long that often, at least not in his profession. He gazed across the street, guided by the sweet sound of a carousel. Yes, a stroll in the park would be a nice way to spend this brief interlude. He crossed the street, and passed through the large black iron gate entranceway to the park. On both sides there were sculpted lions. How long had they sat there? How long would their silent vigil continue? The path to his left led to a miniature pond;

the one to his right, the intoxicating sounds of children's laughter and music. His ears led the way. Spring was definitely here. He passed by a couple of young lovers, their hands interlocked, their faces joyous. He pulled out a small note pad on which a few important names and dates were recorded. Such a pity that young couple, they seemed so happy. He continued along the path and at last came to the central pavilion. It was odd; those who took the time to look at him found nothing to fear, while those who could not, or would not gaze upon him, shuddered at his mere mention. He lingered there a little longer. He had always loved children. Such love, such trust he had found in them. He checked his watch once again. He had to be getting back. He couldn't possibly miss this meeting, nor any other meeting. That was why he so cherished these moments to himself. As he strolled back along the path and through the gate again, he found a different scene. Yes, much different then he had left it. His talent was needed once again, or it would be. This time instead of a peaceful street with cars buzzing along in their own time, the street was fairly empty. There was, however, coming into view now, a bus. It seemed to be driven quite sporadically. The driver was experiencing a heart attack. Such a shame, the bus had just departed from the middle school. It was carrying a full load. He checked his watch again. The couple he had passed in the park had begun to cross street. Apparently they had not noticed this oncoming threat. Again the watch. He had already begun to walk towards the entrance of the park again as the screaming began. The lions, which had stood so long, so dutifully, had now met their most unfortunate end. First he approached the couple, or what was left of



them. He pushed through the crowd. It was not as if any one could do anything for them now. He tapped each of them on the forehead with his cane, quietly saying an apology. Next he proceeded to the bus. It had burst into flames on impact. The flames didn't bother him as much as the sight of this did. On the bus, the fire refused to touch his icy frame. He proceeded down the row; each child he touched on the head, the driver also, each time softly apologizing. It was times like this that he

hated his job. He was so fond of children. It was always the hardest with them. But at least they did not fear him. He pulled out the pad again and proceeded to check off each name as he exited the bus. He walked away slowly towards his next meeting. He was a professional, and he took his job seriously. No one whom he had touched would ever claim that Death was not a gentleman.

- Stephen Scapicchio, III



## *release*

i had forgotten how therapeutic a show can be.

suddenly there was no more hatred, jealousy, anger, aching, trembling uncertainty,  
only the

tremendous rush of physical manifestation of the hours and days and weeks of stress  
and frustration. . .

and emotion.

the drums and the bass create this hysteria beneath me, above me, behind me, the beat  
pulses and throbs. if it had a color, it would be red. it is steady but has a frantic speed  
and wildness that dance clubs will never know. this ain't no techno floor. guitars kick in.  
guitarguitarguitar. the wave is in me, rushing through my veins quicker than any drug  
ever could, the high flushing on my face. This, this is an intense moment: this is the  
push into sublime oblivion. in the pit thoughts are part of an abstract art, and zoom,  
spread out on the ends of nerves they crash down when the crowd starts or jerks en  
masse. Thinking just isn't long term, and that means nothing really matters here. my  
body is thrashing. my skin is everyone's skin. if you fall there are eight hands to pull you  
up and then push you away with a release for them that is similar to yours as you move  
only inches from their forceful thrust into another back. if you want to see the band, just  
motion to go up and up and up you are pushed all the more energy expelled for the wild  
hands beneath you as you fly above the surging bodies. mouth wide either gasping for the  
air or screaming out the words you know, the words that you feel, the words that make  
you want to just stay there expressing what is crashing through your heart and your mind  
by simply breaking out of the shell and the personal space imposed on you by EveryDay.  
there is no loneliness, but that isn't as obvious as one would think. there is a deep quiet  
in one part of my mind because everything around it has increased in volume by so much.  
during the main set the song she always thought about them as being histories of his own  
heart twisting experiences. When i let go of that thought when i saw them (again) for  
what they could represent to

Me

when i decided that i was just as

Worthy of the emotion and of the liberty i lost myself to the release and didn't surface  
until silence. the cool stream of water drizzled by Security into my mouth when the  
music faded felt like the end of a good long cry without the shame.

~ Michelle Whitaker, II



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